



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

FORMER ATLANTA TEACHER SENTENCED TO 17 ½ YEARS PRISON FOLLOWING A CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CONVICTION

ALBANY, Ga.-U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) announced that a former Lee County 8th grade math teacher was sentenced yesterday in federal district court to 17 ½ years prison and three years supervised release after being found guilty on four counts of child pornography charges.

The sentencing of Michael Aaron O'Keefe follows an investigation conducted by ICE special agents operating under the agency's Operation Predator national anti-child sex exploitation initiative.

O'Keefe was arrested by ICE special agents in Nov. 2003. He was indicted on one count of receipt of child pornography, one count of advertising child pornography, and two counts of possession of child pornography.

The investigation revealed that O'Keefe set up a Web site advertising photos of young girls. ICE special agents also discovered that he had posed as a 12-year-old girl in sexually explicit e-mail exchanges with an adult male and sent child pornography to this adult male.

Forensic analysis conducted on two desktop computers and numerous computer diskettes revealed that O'Keefe was distributing child pornography via a Yahoo Internet group.

O'Keefe was found guilty by a jury in the United States District Court for the Middle District of Georgia on Nov. 30, 2004.

"Predators who think that they can exploit our children and escape consequence need to think twice," said Kenneth A. Smith, special agent-in-charge of the Atlanta office. "Our agents work tirelessly to identify, and arrest Predators like O'Keefe who think that they can lurk behind positions of trust."

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jim Crane with the assistance of the Department of Justice, Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section.

The arrest and conviction O'Keefe comes under Operation Predator, a national initiative to protect children from sexual predators, including those who travel overseas for sex with minors, Internet child pornographers, criminal aliens sex offenders, and child sex traffickers. Since Operation Predator was launched in July 2003, ICE agents nationwide have arrested more than 5, 300 predators, including 113 in Atlanta.

ICE encourages the reporting of child predators and any related suspicious activity through its toll-free hotline 1-866 DHS-2ICE.

Suspected child sexual exploitation or missing children may be reported to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, an Operation Predator partner, at 1-800-843-5678 or <http://www.cybertipline.com>.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.